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DISEASE GERMS.

THE composition of the atmosphere has been regarded for years as a subject which chemists have long since decided with an exactness which can scarcely be improved upon. Text-books inform us that the air we breathe is in the main a mixture of the well-known gases oxygen and nitrogen, together with a small but uniform proportion of carbonic acid gas.

Such is, indeed, the composition of pure air; but life is so widely diffused over the globe that except in high Alpine regions, the atmosphere everywhere contains impurities of a more or less detrimental character. Our fires and lights pour into the air innumerable particles of solid carbon, and vapours of petroleum, creosote, and sulphurous acid. Our bakers send into it annually some millions of gallons of alcohol from the fermenting process connected with bread-making; dead and decaying animals and vegetables supply their quota of gaseous materials; while the industries which bring us much of our wealth, diffuse throughout the air numerous small particles of starch, wool, cotton, brickdust, arsenic, and other substances. But these impurities, considerable though they may appear, are really of minor importance. The winds and rains, which we vaguely speak of as 'clearing the air,' carry off most of the suspended particles and wash the soluble gases into the soil. There is another class of atmospheric impurities, however, so universal in their diffusion, and of such vast importance in their effects, that a thorough acquaintance with them will be fraught with incalculable benefit to mankind. These we are familiar with as the motes which dance in the sunbeams, the floating matters in the air, now known to consist, in part at least, of Disease Germs.

Nowadays, people are inclined to scoff at the aims of the old philosophers; but we ought to remember how much modern science owes to these early investigators. The astrologers may be held as mistaken in supposing any connection

to exist between the motions of a star and the life of a human being; yet we are indebted to them for a great deal of our earlier astronomical knowledge. The alchemists who spent their lives in the search for the philosopher's stone, and the mechanicians who devoted years to their quest of perpetual motion, did not spend their lives altogether in vain; for in many departments of chemistry and mechanics, we are now reaping the fruits of their labours. Hence, also, in more recent times the search after the beginnings of life—the dream of spontaneous generation—while fruitless in its direct endeavour, has already conferred upon us blessings great and manifold.

In 1837, Schwann, a Berlin scientist, made the important announcement, that when a decoction of meat is effectually screened from the atmosphere, putrefaction never sets in. Practically, the same principle is the secret of success in the modern trade of preserving meat in tin cans by exclusion of the air. Twenty-two years after Schwann's announcement, a book appeared from the pen of an eminent Frenchman, F. A. Pouchet, giving the results of numerous experiments altogether opposed to Schwann's conclusions. Deeply interested in the discussion, Pasteur, a young French chemist, determined to take the matter in hand, and commenced a series of experiments which have yielded the most interesting and valuable results. Starting with the air, he found that many of the floating particles are not mere specks of inanimate dust, but organised bodies containing the germs of life. Some of these he introduced into animal and vegetable infusions, which he had previously boiled, to destroy any living organisms which might be present in the liquid, the result being that he soon obtained an abundance of microscopic life, and in a short time the infusions invariably became putrid. On the other hand, when similar infusions were thoroughly protected from the entrance of these atmospheric particles, not the slightest indication of life appeared in the liquid, even after months and years; but when the smallest drop of any decomposing liquid was

added, or ordinary air obtained access to the clear infusions, life began to manifest itself, and soon the water teemed with myriads of microscopic organisms.

In this way Pasteur established the fact, that just as oaks grow from acorns, or thistles from thistle-seed, so these minute living organisms are produced according to the common law of generation, springing from previously existing germs or seeds, but never growing spontaneously, or giving the slightest indication that life ever proceeds from anything which has not itself owed its existence to some previous life. Since then, innumerable experiments conducted by our illustrious countryman Professor Tyndall, have fully corroborated Pasteur's researches.

Now, let us glance at several widely separated departments of every-day life, and investigate a few facts which have apparently but little connection with each other.

When milk is long exposed to the air, it becomes sour or putrid; and if we place a drop of sour milk under the microscope, we shall find a number of small organisms linked together like beads upon a string. These are the cause of the sourness; for they have decomposed the sugar of the milk into lactic acid, the substance which imparts the sour taste. The organism which produces this change is similar in nature and appearance to the well-known yeast-plant, which changes sugar into alcohol. Taking, now, a drop of putrid milk, we find it exhibits a different appearance from that which is simply sour; for it swarms with rapidly moving specks, which receive the common name of bacteria. These organisms are very minute, much smaller than those producing sourness, and they are in every case the active agents in producing putrefaction. Expose milk, or meat, or vegetables to the air, and in a short time they will swarm with bacteria. Keep the air from them, and not one of these organisms will be found.

Let us now turn our thoughts for a moment to France. About twenty years ago, a disastrous silkworm disease reduced the produce of cocoons from fifty-two million pounds in 1853 to eight million pounds in 1865, involving a loss of some hundred million francs. Examined under the microscope, the blood of the diseased silkworm was found to contain innumerable animated vibratory corpuscles; the silk-bag was filled with these, instead of with the clear material from which the silk is spun; and these organisms were present in still larger size in the mature moths. Starting with these facts, M. Pasteur attacked the problem, and by securing healthy eggs produced by healthy moths, and by carefully guarding against contagion, restored to France her valuable silk husbandry. But while the practical results he accomplished attest the accuracy of his views and predictions, the observations which led to these results are more immediately interesting. From moths untainted by disease he obtained healthy worms, and on these he conducted his experiments. Taking a diseased worm, and rubbing it up in water, he mixed a little with the food of healthy silkworms; the result being that all the latter became infected, and finally died. A single meal was sufficient to poison them, and the progress of the disease was always attended by

a gradual increase in the number of the above animalcular corpuscles found in their blood. During these investigations, M. Pasteur proved that the disease was spread by the worms scratching each other with their claws, and thus introducing the disease germs into the wound. He found too, that the refuse of diseased worms contained infectious organisms, and this adhering to the mulberry leaves, spread infection among other worms feeding on these leaves.

The same distinguished chemist had his attention drawn to the losses frequently sustained by the wine-growers and vinegar-makers of France. The wines would often become unaccountably acid or bitter, and millions of money were in this way lost to his countrymen. Setting to work in his usual thorough and scientific fashion, he soon discovered that the wine disease was due to the presence of numerous microscopic organisms on the skin of the grape, which, finding their way into the wine, set up putrefactive changes which entirely altered the character of the liquor. Having ascertained the cause, his next task was to find a remedy; and before long he made the discovery, that by simply heating the juice of the grape to a certain temperature, these putrefactive germs were all destroyed, without in any way damaging the quality of the wine. All three diseases, the wine, the vinegar, and the silk, he traced to their living causes; and eventually discovered remedies for each by determining the conditions which prove fatal to these organisms, or which prevent their development.

Passing now into the surgical ward of an English hospital, let us examine an amputated limb which is not healing well. It has begun to putrefy. Taking a little of the matter, we examine it under the microscope, and find it swarming with minute organisms similar to those which we observed in putrid milk. This wound has been exposed to the air. In the next room is a somewhat similar amputation, except that the wound was dressed in such a way as to prevent any of the so-called dust of the air from coming in contact with it. A spray of dilute carbolic acid was kept playing over it all the time it was being operated upon, and now it is healing beautifully, for no living germs have obtained access to it.

A word or two about an animal disease known as splenic fever will bring us to the well-known zymotic diseases which carry off so many human beings. As early as 1850 it was observed that the blood of animals which had died from splenic fever teemed with microscopic organisms resembling minute transparent rods; and it has been placed beyond all doubt that this fever is due to the growth and development of these minute organisms. Placed under favourable conditions, the rods grow till they often become a hundred times their original length. After a time, little dots appear in them, which finally grow to minute egg-shaped bodies, presenting an appearance somewhat like a long row of seeds in a pod. By-and-by the pod—as we may call it—goes to pieces, and the seeds or spores are let loose. Many experiments have been made with both rods and spores. Guinea-pigs, rabbits, and mice were inoculated with the blood of diseased animals containing the rods,

the result being that within twenty or thirty hours they invariably died of splenic fever. By drying the blood which contained only the rods, it was found that it did not retain its infectious properties longer than about a month; but blood containing the developed spores, dried and reduced to dust, even after being kept four years, proved as deadly as at first.

In 1868, M. Chauveau made some interesting discoveries concerning the infectious matter in cow-pox, sheep-pox, small-pox, hydrophobia, glanders, and syphilis. Taking some of the matter, he found that it consisted of a fluid in which were numerous minute granular particles, some of them so minute as to pass through the finest filters. When diluted with water, the larger particles subsided, the finer granules, however, remaining suspended in the water, and the liquid still retaining its infectious properties; but by diffusion in distilled water, these minute particles were completely separated, and the liquid then proved harmless. It was thus shown that the infection was communicated by these minute organised particles, and that even a single one of these possesses such inconceivable fecundity that it will produce quite as powerful effects as if a large quantity of concentrated matter had been introduced into the system. Sufficient evidence has thus been obtained to prove that many diseases are propagated by minute organisms; and it is now a well-ascertained fact that scarlatina, diphtheria, measles, typhus and typhoid fevers are spread in the same fashion.

Let us then briefly sum up what is at present known about the Germ Theory of disease. Experiments having shown that no life is known to spring from inanimate matter, we may reasonably conclude that just as wheat does not grow except from seed, so no disease occurs without some disease germ to produce it. Then, again, we may take it for certain that each disease is due to the development of a particular kind of germ. If we plant small-pox germs, we do not reap a crop of scarlatina or measles; but just as wheat springs from wheat, each disease has its own distinctive germs. Each comes from a parent stock, and has existed somewhere previously. It is true that complications occur, several diseases running their course at one time, or one after the other; but however uncommon, none of them are new. After a forest is cut down, a new variety of trees may spring up; but nobody supposes them to have grown spontaneously; the seeds existed there before, and their growth was due to the occurrence of conditions favourable to their development. So the disease germs which are always floating about may frequently be introduced into our bodies; but it is only when they meet with suitable conditions that they take root and produce disease. Under ordinary circumstances, these germs, though nearly always present, are comparatively few in number, and in an extremely dry and indurated state. Thus, they may frequently enter our bodies without meeting with the conditions essential to their growth; for experiments have shown that it is very difficult to moisten them, and till they are moistened they do not begin to develop. In a healthy system they remain inactive. But anything

tending to weaken or impair the bodily organs furnishes favourable conditions, and thus epidemics almost always originate and are most fatal in those quarters of our great cities where dirt, squalor, and foul air render sound health almost an impossibility. Thus, too, armies suddenly transferred from the regularity and comparative comfort of barrack-life to the dangers, toil, and exposure of the battlefield and the trenches, are often attacked by epidemics. Having once got a beginning, epidemics rapidly spread. The germs are then sent into the air in great numbers and in a moist state; and the probabilities of their entering, and of their establishing themselves even in healthy bodies, are vastly increased. For the same reasons, one disease not unfrequently follows another. The latter is commonly said to have 'changed' into the former; but probably the two are entirely distinct, the second being simply due to the weakening of the system.

Another widespread belief is that foul smells give rise to disease. It is not, strictly speaking, the foul gases, but the germs present in them, that produce the diseases. The effluvia, however, are themselves injurious to health, while they are indications of a state of matters much more dangerous; and it is never sufficient to destroy evil odours without searching out and removing the causes that produce them.

Climate and the weather have also much influence on the vitality of these germs. Cold is a preventive against some diseases, heat against others. But we have still much to learn regarding their behaviour under varying conditions. Tyndall found that sunlight greatly retarded and sometimes entirely prevented putrefaction; while dirt is always favourable to the growth and development of the germs. Sunshine and cleanliness are undoubtedly the best and cheapest preventives against disease.

The method in which these diseases are spread demonstrates the necessity and value of thorough disinfection. A person suffering from one of these zymotic diseases is affected, say, in the throat; well, every time he spits or coughs, or perhaps with every breath, he discharges from his throat a great number of the organisms whose development has produced the disease. These may pass directly into the body of some one near, and thus set up disease in a second person, and so on; or falling on the ground, or settling upon clothes or carpets, they may dry up like particles of dust, and be shaken off the clothes, perhaps many months after, or be carried by the wind to places at a considerable distance. In either case, still retaining all their virulence, they will give rise to a fresh outbreak of disease whenever they meet with favourable conditions. Thorough fumigation or other method of destroying their vitality, largely or entirely prevents this.

In the case of diseases such as typhoid, which attack the stomach, disease germs are removed along with the excreta; and if, as is often the case, the drainage of the town flows into a river, and that river is used in some after-portion of its course as the water-supply of any town near its banks, there is great danger of disease being communicated by the water which we drink; for however well it may be purified and filtered, we have no

guarantee that it will contain none of these germs, which we have seen are so small that they pass through the finest filters. It is in this way that almost all the great cholera and typhoid epidemics have spread in London and other towns. That such a disgusting system should be permitted to exist, is a disgrace to a wealthy and enlightened nation.

How these organisms may be destroyed in cases of disease without injury to the person or animal affected, is the great problem which awaits solution. Wine-making, brewing, silkworm rearing, and surgery, have already shown the immense importance and practical value of a knowledge of this subject. Nowadays, in surgical operations every part of the flesh laid bare is washed with a dilute solution of carbolic acid, which effectually prevents the growth of these germs, and the consequent mortification which used to render amputation so frequently fatal. It is also known that consumption, which is probably a disease set up by some of these organisms, has in a measure been retarded, if not cured by inhalation of carbolic acid. Oxygen, we know, when in excess, proves a deadly poison to these organisms, and its entire absence is equally fatal; but the difficulty in adopting this remedy is that it might prove equally fatal to the person suffering from the disease. We know enough, however, about Disease Germs to show us in what direction future research may be most profitably engaged; and it is to be hoped that before long we shall obtain either a safe and unfailing remedy, or an efficient preventive against those diseases which, set up perhaps by a microscopic particle, eventually decimate continents, and thus afford us convincing evidence of the vast importance of so-called 'little things.'

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

BY DAVID CHRISTIE MURRAY.

CHAPTER XXV.—'HE'S AN AWFULLY ODD FISH
IS STRANGE.'

HAD Gerard known that Constance was going to London, he might perhaps have been more ready to accompany his father thither. But, as a matter of fact, the visit was unpremeditated. The maiden aunt in Chesterfield Street, Mayfair, had money, and was known to be kindly disposed to Constance. When, therefore, the old lady, learning from her brother that he was about to visit London, expressed a strong hope that he would bring Constance with him, Mr Jolly accepted the desire as a command. He was not unaware of the importance of money; and though Constance seemed already fairly provided for, it would still be unwise not to conciliate the maiden aunt, who was naturally anxious to learn at first-hand the details of her niece's engagement. And if Lucretia—that was the name of the maiden aunt—should express any intentions with respect to her testamentary dispositions, Mr Jolly was quite persuaded that at such a juncture nothing could be more natural. It was not diffi-

cult to persuade Constance; for, to tell the truth, she was beginning to find the social atmosphere of the Grange a little stifling. Her father's dull pomposities and shallow aphorisms were insufferably tedious. There are a good many dull and pompous fathers in the world, whose daughters, aided by Love, revere and admire them. Constance was unhappily without Love's aid, and her father wearied her exactly as any other prosy person would have done. In his inmost soul, Mr Jolly had an idea that his style was Disraelian. He was Conservative in politics, and modelled himself naturally on the lines of his party chief. But it is not everybody who can fight in Saul's armour, and the Disraelian style, handled by Mr Jolly, was a cruel thing to suffer under. Reginald found it endurable, because it awakened his own sense of humour. He saw the fun of it; but Constance, who, like many charming women, had but a limited perception of fun, saw and felt only its dreariness. The house itself was somewhat dull after that fever of festivity into which Mr Jolly had for a time plunged it, and she was willing to welcome any reasonable pretence which called her away from it. These two were the reasons which she admitted to herself; but there was another which had more weight than both of them, although she was reluctant to own it—she was weary of Gerard.

Admiration is a pleasant thing to endure, but the signs of it may be so presented as to grow tedious. Gerard had no small talk, and his icy divinity froze him. He was not happy in her presence; but his dreams of her presence made him happy. There was not the faintest doubt in his mind that when once they were married they would live a life of pattern felicity. The old truth which it was Pope's good fortune to crystallise for English-speaking people, operated here as elsewhere:

Hope springs eternal in the human breast;
Man never is, but always to be blest.

The future was roseate; the present, misty. Always that wonderful glamour, which perhaps alone makes life worth living, lay about to-morrow, but never about to-day.

Whether it were an old device or a new one, I cannot say, but I remember that in the year 1865 I witnessed an acted morality or mystery, the memory of which has remained with me. The scene was the cavalry barracks at Cahir, in County Tipperary—the occasion, the annual regimental sports of the Fourth Royal Irish Dragoon Guards. When the sword-exercise and foil-play and boxing, the running, walking, leaping, and vaulting matches were over—when the men had raced behind wheelbarrows and jumped in sacks, and the tug-of-war was lost and won, there came, to crown the festival, a donkey-race. Private Paddy Byrne, a regimental unit attached to the F Troop—this is not fiction, but history, and when, O when, did it cross Paddy's mind that an old comrade would put *him* in novel?—with a wonderful laughable Irish grin on the Hibernian face of him, perched himself an inch or two for'ard of his donkey's tail, and laid between the moke's ears a switch,

on the end whereof swung two inviting carrots and a clean white turnip. Away went the donkey in pursuit of these tit-bits, never more than a stride's length from his watering teeth, yet never attainable. Every stride deceived him; but Hope sprang eternal in the asinine bosom, and he still pursued. I was young and thoughtless in those days, and at this acted mystery I laughed unthinkingly. But in the years which have gone since then, I know now that not a day has passed in which I have not with equal wisdom raced after something no more worth having and no more attainable, and Paddy Byrne's donkey has with me risen to the dignity of a moral *mythus*, preaching eternal truths. And he typifies, indeed, not me alone, but a whole hungry foolish world, tearing headlong in pursuit of that sweet and dear to-morrow which it never reaches. With the rest of the world, let him typify this poor hungry-hearted Gerard. 'If I laugh,' wrote the saddest satirist that ever put pen to paper, 'tis that I may not weep.' One may as well put things cheerfully as sorrowfully. You may suck marrow of mirth, and grow as wise as by sipping the salt of tears—if you are a born angel, and a saint by nature.

Mr Jolly apprised Constance, in the afternoon, of her aunt's desire; and it was decided that they should all three go to town together on the following day. Gerard came in the evening as usual; but she allowed him to ride away without telling him of the arrangement made. An hour before starting, she sent him a brief note, saying that her aunt desired to see her, and that she was going to London, but of design aforesought, forgot to give her lover her town address. She remedied this omission a day or two later, when she had secured a little quiet, and had discovered that it is better to be bored by admiration than not to be admired at all. To her amazement, Gerard did not fly to her when she lifted her finger. A day or two passed, and she did not hear from him. Matters grew a little wonderful, and even a little alarming. We have seen already that Val Strange made a call upon her. Familiar as Val contrived to seem in Reginald's eyes, this was his first visit; but he and Miss Lucretia were known to each other beforehand, and Val was a reminder to the old lady of her one romance. These renewals of youth are singular. Val's father was the only one among many admirers for whom Miss Lucretia in her youth had cared; but with that perversity which is a part of love, they had quarrelled over some trifles or other no bigger than a mote in a sunbeam, and had so parted—the man to forget as men forget, the woman to remember as women remember. Of this the young fellow knew nothing. Had he known, he might have sought the sympathy and intervention of the old lady, and have besought her to implore Constance to break off a loveless engagement. It is hard to say whether such a course could or could not have been justified, though there is little doubt that Val would have been able to justify it to himself. But he was ignorant of the tie between himself and the old maid, and knew nothing of the affection with which she regarded him. Had he known, the course of this story might have been altered; but then, there is nothing so slight in life that it might not alter the course of any human tragedy or comedy. And now Val was gone from Con-

stance's little circle, and still no Gerard came. The absence of one, and the silence of the other, became remarkable, before Reginald came to explain one of the phenomena, and a shock which was in its way a sort of social earthquake, came to explain the second. Reginald lounged in a day or two after Val's departure, and found his sister alone. Some conversational preliminaries being gone through which had but little interest for either of them, Reginald said casually: 'I say, Con., did Strange tell you he was going to the West Indies?'

'No,' said Constance, bending closer over her embroidery. 'When is he going?' She tried to make the question sound commonplace and disinterested, but read failure in her own tones.

'Oh,' said Reginald, ensconcing himself for more safety behind his eyeglass, and watching her keenly, 'he's gone. Started yesterday.'

Constance, with a great effort, retained composure. 'Why did he go?' she asked. 'Had he business there—property there?'

'Oh,' said the wary youth, 'you never know where to have Strange. You'd think he was dead-set on something or other, and meant to spend his life at it, and in half an hour he's dead-set on something else. As I told him the other day, he's like Dryden's Duke of Buckingham, "Everything by turns, and nothing long." You never know what he'll do next.'

Women are much better actresses than men are actors, and when Constance spoke, her nonchalance might have puzzled a less careful observer. She held her embroidery a little from her in both hands, turned her beautiful head this way and that, regarding it; and then, slowly raising her violet eyes, she dropped one negligent word: 'Indeed?' But she had not calculated that Reginald suspected, and was watching, and so she overdid it by a trifle, and seemed to his keen vision supernaturally indifferent.

'Yes,' murmured the watcher, fixing his eyeglass with a facial contortion which laid the ghost of expression still lingering, 'he's an awfully odd fish is Strange. You really never know where to have him.' He was modest enough to distrust his own powers, and he stopped short there, having done enough, as he conceived, for one day. His finesse was well meant, and for the moment it was satisfactory.

'So,' said Constance to herself, 'he has run away to avoid me.' Her heart sank at this desecration. She had forbidden Strange ever to speak again on the topic he had once broached to her; but she had not forbidden him her presence, and indeed had not the strength of heart so to deny him or herself. She pitied him—it was sweet to pity him. Before she had heard his confession, she had gone the usual maiden path to love, and had not known to what goal it led her. She found his society pleasant, more pleasant than that of any man she had ever encountered—so much, she was aware of. She knew that her society was pleasing to him; but for so beautiful a woman, she was amazingly devoid of vanity, and no thought of his being in love with her crossed her mind. For that matter, her engagement to Gerard seemed to hem her about with a sort of Society sacredness—men did not fall in love with young ladies who were engaged to be married. And when at last Strange's wild

declaration was made, her own heart answered it with a voice which there was no chance of mistaking. Here at last was the man who held the key to her heart, out of all the scores who had come a-wooing, and he came too late. It might have seemed easy enough to do the only thing which under the circumstances was wise and honourable—namely, to send Gerard his dismissal and to tell him that a union between them could lead only to unhappiness. But the wise and right thing to do is not always that which presents itself most attractively, and she had no one to advise and help her. That Gerard would have freed her, had she appealed to him, though he broke his heart in doing it, went of course without saying. But then, there was the natural disinclination to so pronounced an action, the natural fear of his silent reproach, the natural dread of the county talk. It would be bitter to be called a jilt; and there was no reason or shadow of a reason, except the true one, which she could assign against her engagement to Gerard. So, like wiser people, she decided to let things take their course for a time, with a vague hope that something might come to pass which would unravel the tangled skein and lay it out straight and smooth once more. And her reluctance to pain Gerard had more ground than a natural tenderness of disposition which is happily common to most women. She respected him, and in her secret heart was sensitively afraid of his ill opinion. Notwithstanding the general chilliness of their courtship, they might have made a very happy married pair, but for the advent of Val Strange. It is only in novels that husband and wife are kept apart by those thread-like filaments of feeling of which a certain school of feminine romancists are so prodigal. The plain English of that matter is, that unless a man is absolutely distasteful, or the woman's mind is preoccupied, marriage is the shortest way to love, and the surest.

S N A K E - A N E C D O T E S.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

To the generality of people the very word snake conveys a shuddering impression. The animals themselves are regarded with wholesale aversion. Nor is this altogether to be wondered at when we consider the terrible effects produced by the bite of many species—the mortal effects produced by a certain section of the tribe. There are, however, some folks who, so far from entertaining any aversion to those creatures, are anxiously engaged in studying their ways, their mode of life, and happily the dreaded powers with which the poisonous species—one-fifth only of the entire race—are endowed. In Great Britain, one species only, the adder, is poisonous, though not to the extent of being deadly poisonous; but the case is different in countries such as India and South America, where there are snakes from whose bite there is no hope of recovery. Happily, these death-dealing creatures are few compared to their more innocent brethren, though in India the fatalities which are yearly reported are still as appalling as ever. With a view to providing a remedy for the bite of what are termed deadly

snakes, many experiments have been, and still continue to be made; but as yet we have heard of no certain cure. One of our greatest authorities, Dr Fayrer, is obliged to admit that there is no hope for the person who has been bitten by a cobra whose poison is fully secreted and delivered.

Our contributor Dr Arthur Stradling, late of the Royal Mail (Marine) Service, who favours us with the following interesting anecdotes, has made a lifelong study of the habits of snakes, both poisonous and non-poisonous. He has, we believe, made many experiments with the hope of mitigating the dire results accruing from snake-bites, and has even gone the length of voluntarily permitting various poisonous species to exercise their fangs upon his own person! Taking certain precautions beforehand—the nature of which Dr Stradling has not yet made public—he has risked his life in the endeavour to counteract the baleful effects of snake-poison. If in the end he may be enabled to prescribe an antidote that shall prove effectual in staying the effects of the dreaded virus, mankind will owe him a debt of gratitude akin to that which it has paid to the discoverer of vaccination.

With this prelude, we offer to our readers a few of the Doctor's snake-stories. He writes as follows :

For the truth of the following anecdotes, in which serpents play a part more or less prominent, I can vouch; the incidents—except the first—having all occurred within my own personal experience. The exception, however, is matter of history at the Zoological Gardens; and not only were the eye-witnesses of the occurrence—among whom were Mr Bartlett and the late Mr Frank Buckland—well known to me—my informants, indeed—but the snake itself afterwards became a great friend of mine.

A few years ago, an immense anaconda or water-boa was received at the Gardens in Regent's Park, brought in a barrel on board a steamer from Central America to Liverpool, and forwarded thence by rail. This reptile, as perhaps my readers are aware, is the largest of the serpent tribe, inhabiting the swamps of Tropical America, and sometimes attaining a length of thirty or forty feet, it may be much more. It is one of the Constrictors—that is to say, it is non-venomous, and kills its prey, like the boa and python, by crushing it within the convolutions of its powerful body. In the British Museum there is a fine stuffed specimen, about thirty feet long, represented in the act of seizing, though not constricting, a peccary. The subject of my tale measured twenty-three feet in length, and in girth was equal to the circumference of a man's thigh—a formidable customer, capable of swallowing a sheep. Prepared for his reception, with the floor duly gravelled, and a tank with water, Den No. 3, on the left-hand side of the reptile-house, counting from the entrance-door, was allotted to him; and within the cage is a stunted tree, up which these large serpents are wont to climb. The top of the cask unscrewed, the creature was allowed to find his way into the cage through the small aperture behind.

Roaming about in the full enjoyment of his new-found liberty, he presently turned round between the tree and the front of the cage

—a space of several feet—in such a way that the bight of his body—to use a seafaring expression—lay within this space. Here, feeling the contact of the glass on one side and the wood on the other, he suddenly expanded his coil, probably in the sheer luxury of being able to stretch himself, and pushed the front of the cage out! Not simply the glass itself, which was not broken, but the heavy framework in which it is fixed, was forced away from its connection with the surrounding beams. Hereupon, several of the spectators had the presence of mind to rush forward and catch the sash before it could fall to the floor. In this way they supported it as well as they could with hands and knees until fresh assistance arrived, for the weight was too great for them to lift it back into position again; while the reptile inside, excited by the shouting and commotion, was dashing about furiously in all directions. This scattered the gravel about; and it was then found impossible to return the frame into its proper place, as the groove was choked with the small stones. Mr Frank Buckland, aided now by a number of men from all parts of the Gardens, still kept the glass from descending, while the keeper and carpenter, who got into the cage from behind, having thrown some blankets over the snake and pushed him into a corner, proceeded to scrape away the gravel. But the anaconda, now thoroughly enraged, contrived to extricate his head from the covering, and before the men could escape, flew at the carpenter and seized him by the shoulder. The keeper courageously turned, gripped the serpent by the throat, and forced him to let go, but not until the unfortunate man's arm was terribly lacerated by the powerful lancet-like teeth.

Luckily, the door of the reptile-house had been locked when the first *contretemps* took place, so that no casual visitors were witnesses of the scene; otherwise, fainting women and horror-stricken men would doubtless have added to its confusion. By this time the groove was clear, and the frame temporarily secured, so that the carpenter made good his exit, while the keeper, watching his opportunity, flung the creature from him and jumped out.

But it afterwards became very tame and tractable, and I established very friendly relations with it. Many a time have I stood at the door with Holland the keeper, and allowed it to rear its great black-spotted head out of the tank till it flickered its tongue against my face, while I patted its shining scales with my hand. Towards Holland it was most affectionate, and would always come up to the grated ventilator to see him when he was sweeping out the passage behind, though it took no notice of the people in front. Snakes take strong likings and dislikes to people, often unaccountably. Holland was one of the kindest and most intelligent keepers that ever handled a reptile, and could generally win any thing's confidence; yet there was—and probably is still—a West African python, some sixteen feet long, in the house, that positively conceived a murderous hatred of him. Why this should be so, neither he nor any one else could ever understand; but it is a fact that this python at feeding times would sit up close to the door and wait, not for the ducks and rabbits, but for him!

The anaconda to which we have just referred was eventually killed by a guinea-pig! The little animal had been put into the den for a smaller snake's delectation, as our friend was torpid just then, owing to the approaching casting of the skin, in which state they do not feed. The guinea-pig was running carelessly over him, and the irritation of its feet probably caused the anaconda to move slightly, for its leg became entangled between two folds of the serpent's body—not constricted or nipped in anger, in which case it would have been all up with guinea-pig in a very short time—and it could not get free. It must probably have struggled some time, and then bitten its unconscious captor till it got away, for a great hole was found in the snake's side, and it lost much blood. This caused such profuse suppuration and ulceration of the whole body, that the poor brute had to be destroyed.

I have succeeded in bringing alive to this country two specimens of that deadliest of serpents, the Brazilian *curucucu*, or bush-master as it is called in Guiana; and in connection with the first of these I had a disagreeable little adventure. It was sent to me in Rio de Janeiro in an open bowl-shaped basket, having been caught with a lasso, which, drawn tight behind its large triangular head, and passed through the wicker-work, secured it to the bottom of the basket. Evidently, it could not go home like this. I had no snake-tongs, and was not at that time quite so confident about manipulating poisonous serpents as closer familiarity with them has since made me; besides, a cabin on board ship contains so many nooks and crannies wherein a snake, once escaped from control, would be wholly irrecoverable. Therefore, I covered the mouth of the basket with canvas in such a way as to convert it into a sort of kettle-drum; and cut a square hole in this, which corresponded exactly, when the drum was turned upside down, to an aperture in a snake-box, made by removing the perforated zinc. Then, applying the two accurately together, I cut the noose from the outside, in the hope that the reptile would drop through into the box. This, however, he refused to do, but darted round and round inside the basket, striking passionately; and as the wicker was neither very thick nor close in texture, it may be imagined that the situation was rather a sensational one. I had commenced operations just as we were steaming out of the Bay of Rio; and while affairs stood in the position I have indicated, we crossed the bar. The heavy swell from the outside caught the ship right abeam, and caused her to give two or three of the most tremendous lurches I ever experienced. I thought for the moment that she was going over. Everything in my cabin went adrift; books, boxes, cages, chairs, and about a dozen other snakes, came tumbling about me with a deafening din of smashing glass and woodwork. I lost my footing, and was thrown down; and as the ship rolled back to the weather-side, a huge wave thundered in at the open port and flooded the cabin; but I clung to my basket and box all the time, holding them together literally for dear life; for I knew I might as well be drowned or get my brains knocked out, as let my prisoner escape. He was safely housed at last; but a filament of the grass

lasso remained around his neck, spite of all my attempts to disengage it; this interfered with his respiration, and he died shortly after his arrival at the Zoo.

Having brought home many scores, perhaps hundreds, of live snakes in the course of my voyages, I have at different times published the results of my experience in that line, in the hope of inducing others to do the same. In the study of ophiology, living specimens are a great desideratum, since, after death and in spirits, snakes alter so much as to be scarcely recognisable, especially when injured, as they usually are. Nothing is more easily or safely kept during a voyage than a snake, if attention be paid to one or two small details. It is more easily kept than a bird, as it requires neither food, water, light, nor abundant ventilation; and beyond warmth, needs scarcely more care than a dead one in a bottle; but I suppose it is because these small details are so little known that we get so few rare snakes at the Zoo. In my papers, I have endeavoured to point out not only all that is necessary for their well-being in transmission, but also the dangers connected with them to be avoided on board ship. Nevertheless, an incident happened to one of mine some time ago, the possibility of which had never entered my head. I say to 'one of mine'; but in reality the reptile, a fine full-grown rattlesnake, did not belong to me, but to a brother-officer, who had bought it for presentation to the Zoological Garden at Hamburg, on the strength of my promise to look after it for him. It was brought on board in a small square box—a Schiedam-case, in fact—neatly tied up in brown paper, at my suggestion, and labelled 'Feather Flowers,' for the benefit of inquisitive passengers. This box was fronted with galvanised wire-netting of small mesh, which must have been nailed on after the snake had been put in, as there was no door. All was perfectly secure; so, as I had a numerous serpent tenantry at the time in my own specially constructed cases, I decided to let my lodger remain where it was, more especially as I judged, from its plump appearance, that it had lately fed, and would require no more nourishment till it got home. (It is worthy of remark that, as a rule, snakes feed, or require to be fed, only at long intervals; a rattlesnake has been known to live a year and eleven months without food.)

Imagine my surprise when, on going to my cabin about a week later, I met a little rattlesnake, six or seven inches long, climbing over the combing of the doorway! There was no doubt about it; *Crotalus horridus** was written in every scale of his wicked little head and diamond-patterned back, and signed by the horn at the end of his tail, which went quivering upwards as soon as he saw me. It was not a time to stand on ceremony, so I stood on *him* instead. Inside the cabin was another, wriggling along the floor, on whom also I executed a *pas seul* without further inquiry; and on turning round, sure enough there was a third on the washing-stand, sticking up his head and tail with the most menacing intentions. There was no longer any doubt that an interesting event had happened, a fact which was evidenced by the spectacle of

the box swarming with writhing little corkscrews, one of which was in the very act of escaping through the wire. I snatched up a towel and pressed it over the case; and while my boy nailed it on, and thus blinded the front, I despatched the two strays.

Now came the question, What was to be done? The inmates were safe enough for the time; but it obviously would not do to trust to a thin towel as the only dividing medium between them and the ship at large, for the rest of the voyage. I had to be cautious then, not being in possession of the means which place me now to a great extent beyond the pale of danger, and allow me to handle these things with comparative impunity; but I was none the less anxious to save the brood. A woman happily extricated me from my dilemma—the old stewardess, who was quite in my confidence, since she 'didn't mind them things,' and who used to allay any anxiety on the subject among lady-passengers with, I fear, a greater regard for me than for the truth. She gave me an old stocking; and this is what we did with it. First, we removed all the nails from one corner at the back of the box for about two inches along the two sides of the angle, and fixed a screw instead at the extreme angle itself. Then, with an excision saw—out of my case of surgical instruments—we cut through the wood for two inches each way, so as to complete the square, then nailed the mouth of the stocking over it, and finally removed the screw with a small screw-driver through a tiny slit in the stocking itself. The piece of wood, two inches square, thus severed all connection, and the screw dropped down into the foot; and by dint of shaking and knocking, the little reptiles were induced to follow. When a good many were in, the stocking was tied with cord tightly near the heel, and again about an inch higher, and the lower part was cut off between the two ligatures. This was emptied of its contents into a glass box which stood ready for their reception, while the rest of the babies were shaken down into the leg of the stocking, which still remained a *cul de sac*. The only hitch in the proceedings was a momentary though rather serious one, caused by mamma protruding her head and evincing a disposition to follow her offspring. When all the little ones—there were thirteen of them, exclusive of those I had killed—were out of the box, the bag was again tied twice, and divided; and they were restored to the society of their brothers and sisters.

But stop a bit! The resources of our very subtle contrivance were not yet exhausted. About a foot-length of that most useful stocking was still left, and this was tied once more, but this time close up to the box; then the lower end was untied, two rats introduced and fastened up again; then, the upper ligature being removed, the rats were shaken into the cage, and the maternal rattlesnake was compensated for the loss of her promising family by a good dinner. Finally, the stocking—or what was left of it—was pushed into the box, and the square piece of wood was nailed securely on again over it. But there was a pleasing uncertainty for the remainder of the voyage as to how many had got adrift before I discovered them, and where they had

* The Latin name for the rattlesnake.

stowed themselves, which rendered going to bed, putting on one's boots and the like, full of interest. When the importation of rattlesnakes becomes a recognised branch of industry, I shall take out a patent for that stocking dodge.

THE FISHERWOMAN OF HONFLEUR.

A TALE OF THE FRENCH COMMUNE.
IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

THERE was an unusual stir and bustle in the old-fashioned and generally dull town of Honfleur, opposite the port of Havre, in France. The old weather-worn, worm-eaten, wooden wharfs and jetties were thronged with fisherwomen and girls, all clad in their gala attire, whose number increased as they were joined by fresh arrivals from the neighbouring sea-coast, many having come from distant villages and hamlets. There was such eager, lively, and continuous chattering, that a stranger might have imagined there had occurred a second confusion of tongues—confined on this occasion to the gentler sex. The eyes of all present were directed seawards, and from time to time, some one would mount one of the wooden piles to which small vessels that frequented the harbour were moored, and, pointing to a speck on the water, visible in the far distance, would cry: ‘Ils viennent! Ils viennent! Je les vois!’ (They come! They come! I see them!) And for a few moments the clamour of voices would be hushed, only to break forth again with expressions of disappointment; for these fisherwomen and girls had assembled to greet the return of husbands, brothers, sons, and lovers who had been long absent, engaged in the cod-fishery in the stormy North Sea.

For many weeks past, the weather had been tempestuous; and those who had friends and relations at sea—and these comprised almost every inhabitant of the town and the neighbouring sea-coast—had passed many a sleepless night, listening to the fierce gusts of wind that swept around their humble and often exposed dwellings; or had started out of a troubled slumber to breathe a short but earnest prayer for the safety of the absent ones; for there had come from time to time sad stories of fishing-vessels that had foundered at sea with all hands; and all who heard these dismal stories dreaded lest the lost vessels might be those which had sailed a few months before with their dearest relations and friends on board.

On the previous night, however, a steam-packet had arrived at Honfleur, and her captain had reported the glad tidings that he had that day passed the homeward-bound Honfleur fishing-fleet off Dieppe, all safe, and that, as the wind was favourable, the vessels might be expected to arrive in port the next morning. Hence the vast and eager concourse of fisherwomen from the town and the adjacent coast.

At length there was a general hush. A speck that to a landsman would have appeared like a bird hovering over the water, was discerned in the far distance; then another, and yet another became visible. There was no longer any doubt that the fleet was approaching. Nearer and nearer the vessels drew; the cut of their sails

could be discerned; then their low black hulls appeared, and the experienced eyes of the fisherwomen recognised the vessels in which their husbands, lovers, and sons had sailed. The women counted the approaching luggers. Not one vessel of the little fleet was missing. But it yet remained to be seen whether all the crews had returned safe and well; and the hearts of the anxious watchers beat quickly, with hopes, doubts, and fears commingled.

Another weary hour passed away, and the vessels were off the port. Then arose from them a cheer which brought relief to the anxious women. Well they knew its meaning. It announced, that all who had sailed with the fleet had returned safe and well. The cheer was answered with a general shrill cry of joy. The vessels entered the harbour and ranged up alongside the wharf; and amidst cries of welcome, bursts of hysterical laughter, and tears of joy and gladness, the hardy, weather-beaten fishermen leaped on shore to greet their impatient loved ones. It was a strange yet pleasing sight to see these stalwart, weather-browned, whiskered and bearded seamen, clad in their coarse pilot jackets, tarry petticoat-trousers, heavy sea-boots, and oilskin sou'-wester caps—their garments still damp, and glistening with the spray which had fallen in showers over the vessels' decks, even to the moment when they entered the sheltered harbour—clasped in the loving embraces of the women and girls the instant their feet touched the wharf. The elder women, though brown and wrinkled, were yet robust and healthy; the young women and girls fresh and comely, with pleasant pretty faces, fair complexions, blue eyes, and glossy brown hair. All alike, old and young, were neatly and smartly attired in their picturesque fisherwomen's costume, with high, wide-frilled caps, white as snow, short, full petticoats, creaseless blue or gray stockings, and neat buckled shoes, which set off their well-formed lower limbs to great advantage; while many of them wore large earrings of real gold, handed down as heirlooms from grandmothers and great-grandmothers.

Amongst the first to leave their craft was a tall, handsome, young man, with laughing blue eyes, and curly, dark-brown hair, who leaped to the wharf into the extended arms of a pretty girl, apparently not more than eighteen years of age, who, as she embraced her lover, seemed perfectly regardless of the surrounding crowd.

‘Welcome—welcome home, my Antoine!’ cried the girl as she kissed her lover's whiskered cheek. ‘Ah, how I have prayed and sighed for thy return! The storms have been so severe; and we heard such bad news that my heart was troubled. But the blessed Madonna hearkened to my prayers, and again I behold thee safe and well. The sight repays me for all my sufferings.’

The youthful pair released each other, and forcing a passage through the thick of the crowd, strolled away side by side in the direction of their native village, each with an arm twined round the other's waist. There was silence for a few minutes. Both were happy with their own thoughts.

Madeleine at length broke the silence. ‘Thou hast not told me about thy voyage, Antoine. Has it been successful?’

'Successful as I could desire, my Madeleine,' replied the young man. 'If the gales have sometimes blown fiercely, it is what we fishermen must look for; and we care little for the weather if other things favour us. The good St Antoine [St Anthony is regarded by the French fishermen as their patron saint] has watched over us, and guided our vessels safe home.—And now, hearken, Madeleine! Tell me, dearest, is it not time that we possessed a lugger of our own?' glancing over his shoulder towards the vessel he had just quitted, whose masts could be seen amidst those of the other craft in the port. 'Will not the gains of this voyage make up the necessary amount, Madeleine?'

It is customary among the fishermen of the northern and western coasts of France, on their betrothal—which usually takes place at an early age—to some young maiden of their class, to place their wages at the end of each voyage in the hands of their fiancées, for safe keeping, reserving only what is sufficient for their necessary expenditure, and for the renewal of their outfits before they sail again, with perhaps a trifle beyond this amount, to pay for their small indulgences and harmless recreations. The young women having attended school when children, are generally possessed of some little education; while the boys go to sea with their relatives or friends as soon as they are of the slightest service on shipboard. Thus, few among the latter know how to read or write. It is customary also with the young women, after betrothal, to stipulate with their lover, that, previous to their marriage, some object for their mutual benefit shall be attained, such as the purchase of a fishing-lugger, or a share in such a vessel, or at least the means of purchasing the needful furniture, &c., for a humble household—according to their position.

Antoine and Madeleine belonged to what may be termed the superior class of fisher-folk. Both had been left orphans at an early age, and each had inherited a few thousand francs on the death of their parents. This money had been carefully set aside—but not in a bank. The French fisher-folk, in the days of which we write, had no faith in banks, and preferred to keep their savings where they might be secure, and ready to hand when required. To these joint bequests, Antoine's wages, and Madeleine's earnings from knitting and fancy-netting in her leisure hours, had been added from time to time, until, when Antoine sailed on his last voyage, but a small addition to the savings already accumulated was needed for the accomplishment of the desired object.

Madeleine—although she had been firm in her resolve not to wed her lover until the object of their mutual ambition was secured—was no coquette. 'It is now three years ago, my Antoine,' she replied to her lover's question, 'since we betrothed ourselves to each other in the chapel of Our Lady of Lorette. I was then but sixteen, you were nineteen years of age. I shall be twenty years old on my next birthday, three weeks hence. We have more than sufficient, Antoine, for the purchase of a lugger with everything on board complete, without counting thy profits on this last voyage. My poor old uncle, Pierre le Blanc, died soon after you sailed the last

time, and he left me a handsome legacy. The profits of your last voyage will be so much extra, which we can lay by, or expend on furniture and such other things as may be necessary. Perhaps, Antoine, if thou wilt, my approaching birthday may be our wedding-day?'

It is needless to state that the young fisherman was more than willing that the wedding should take place at the time mentioned by his fiancée. In due course the banns were published in the little village church, and on the anniversary of her birthday, Madeleine Letour and Antoine Duroc were united.

A new fishing-lugger, with masts and spars and sails and rigging all complete, was purchased; and Antoine remained at home for some months after his marriage, leisurely preparing his vessel for sea, but chiefly passing his time with his young wife. Occasionally, with the object of testing the qualities of the new vessel, which was called *The Madeleine*, the young fellow sailed for a day's fishing along the coast; but, for the first time since he was old enough to go to sea, the Honfleur fleet of luggers sailed for the far distant cod-fishery without him.

It has been hinted that when the meeting took place between the returned fishermen and their wives, sisters, and sweethearts, all present on the occasion were too full of joy to care to conceal their happiness. There was, nevertheless, one individual present who had no share in the general feeling of gladness, whose heart was, on the contrary, full of suppressed passion, hatred, and jealousy. This individual, however, was not a member of the fisher community. He was one Lucien Pierrot, the son of a rich *bourgeois* of Paris, who owned considerable property in Honfleur and its vicinity. Lucien was accustomed frequently to visit the town to receive the rents from his father's tenants, and on other matters of business; for though he was a gambler and spendthrift, and addicted to many other vices, he was an only son, and his father, though often deceived, continued to place confidence in him. During one of these visits, at the date of the annual Honfleur fair, Lucien met with Madeleine—who was visiting the fair with party of female friends—and was struck with the grace and beauty of the young fisher-girl. He sought to introduce himself to her by offering her trifling presents as 'fairings'; but the fisher-folk are an exclusive class, who hold themselves aloof from strangers. Madeleine declined, bashfully, yet decidedly, to accept the proffered gifts, and strove to avoid the young man's attentions. In nowise disconcerted, however, Lucien, taking advantage of the license allowed at fair-time, attached himself to the party, in the hope of inducing Madeleine to look more favourably upon him, by ingratiating himself with her companions. All his gallantry was, however, thrown away. The young women took no heed of him; and separated for their respective abodes without bestowing one parting word or glance upon him.

Unaccustomed to be thus cavalierly treated by young women whom he honoured with his attentions, Lucien had been in the habit of using every effort to win Madeleine's affections. He dared not visit her at her home in the village, for he

was well aware of the pride and independence of the fisher-folk, who would stand on little ceremony with him if it became known to them that he was intruding his attentions upon one of their young people. But he contrived to meet her whenever she strolled beyond the village; and when, twice a week, she attended the market at Honfleur, he was always present, and was a frequent and liberal purchaser of the fancy wares she offered for sale. Always civil, and even polite in his manner towards her, he gave her no opportunity to complain of his conduct to her friends; yet, though she strove in every way to make it apparent to him that his presence was disagreeable to her, she was unable to shake him off. At length he grew more bold, and ventured to speak of his affection for her, and entreated her to accompany him to Paris, promising to make her his wife immediately on their arrival in that city. But he met with such a withering repulse, that he instantly regretted his temerity. The look of anger and scorn in the eyes of the young girl and the tone of her voice, told plainly that she was in earnest; and from that time, he had ceased his open persecutions. But he nevertheless resolved to gain his end by some other means. He had discovered that Madeleine was betrothed to a young fisherman; and though Antoine was personally unknown to him, Lucien conceived a mortal hatred for him, and vowed that if he failed in his object, he would find some way of revenging himself both on the young girl and her lover.

On the day when the fleet arrived in port, and the fisherwomen and girls were assembled on the wharfs, as already described, to greet their long absent husbands and lovers, Lucien also might have been seen skulking in the background, wrapped in a cloak, drawn up so as to conceal his features, eagerly watching the fishermen as they leaped on shore. He saw Madeleine on the wharf; and then he saw a handsome young fisherman, who, the moment he landed, was clasped in the young girl's embrace. He ground his teeth with impotent rage, and in his eagerness to get a good view of Antoine, stepped a few paces forward, and allowed the cape of his cloak to fall back.

As Antoine and Madeleine were forcing a passage through the crowd, Madeleine caught a momentary glimpse of her detested persecutor. The young girl shuddered involuntarily; and Antoine tenderly inquired whether she felt cold. Madeleine was almost inclined to acquaint her lover with the cause of her alarm; but she dreaded the immediate consequences of such a disclosure, and feeling secure in her lover's protection, she deemed it advisable to keep her secret. 'Now that Antoine has returned, and our marriage will so soon take place,' she thought, 'that bad man will see that it will be useless to trouble me any longer, and will no doubt return to Paris.'

Lucien continued to follow the young couple at a distance, midway to the village. Had he dared, he would have interposed himself between the lovers; but Lucien was naturally a coward; he knew that the stalwart young fisherman would have crushed him as easily as he could have flung a child from him, and he was forced to content himself with brooding over

plans of vengeance. He could do nothing just now; but he thought it probable that after her lover had again gone to sea, Madeleine would be more amenable to his advances and persuasions. And if such were not the case, he believed in his power to find some means of wreaking his vengeance upon both. So he turned aside from following them further that day, and left the happy and youthful couple to the enjoyment of each other's society.

HUMOURS OF IRISH DISTRICT VISITING.

'MISS MARTHA, it's Anty Dillon's Molly that's here. Her mother is tearin' mad wid the toothache, an' would ye be afferin' givin' her the last taste in life of jam, she says, if you plaze, to take the stang out of her mouth, an' help her swallay the bit o' bread? She hasn't slep' or et for two days.'

'Miss Ellen has gone out with the keys, and won't be back till after the Bible class.'

'Shure, I tould her that, Miss, an' she says she'll come agin bime-by.'

'Jam for toothache!' I exclaimed.

'Yes; it is a grand specific,' said Martha drily, 'especially in families where there are children. There is an epidemic of toothache this spring. Last year it was influenza, till I began to give black currant vinegar instead of jam. But vinegar won't do for the teeth, you know.—And now I am sorry I must leave you for an hour; one of my old women is dying, and another has sent to say she is "downhearted," and wants to see me particularly.'

'May I go with you? I would like it, if they don't mind.'

'Oh, they will be delighted to see a strange lady. But I am afraid you will find it lugubrious. Their talk will be all about death and the grave, this time. However, it will be characteristic, and possibly amusing; so, come along.'

'You see,' said my friend as we set out, 'the Roman Catholics are as twelve to one in the town, but there are a good many Protestants for all that—poor ones, and the Archdeacon is very careful of them. He knows them all personally, and their circumstances, and goes to see them himself when necessary. The parish is divided into districts, with a lady-visitor for each. We go our rounds once a week regularly, and report to the Archdeacon anything that requires his attention. And if our people fall into necessity or tribulation, want advice or help, they send for us, or come to us, at any time. "I never felt the loss o' me father an' mother till Miss Mary got married an' wint away," said an old woman to me once, speaking of one of us who had left the town. They often tell me I am like a mother to them.—Here we are at Mrs Nolan's. Yes; she's still alive, I see.'

It was the usual mud cabin, the open door admitting to the one room which served as kitchen, sitting-room, and chamber of death. A kettle was boiling on the hearth, and a teapot stood by. Two or three women sat round the fire, waiting for the final scene. The place was swept, and the furniture set in order; and by the bed, where an old woman lay slumbering fitfully, a chair was placed for visitors.

'Shure, you're just in time, Miss Martha—she's goin' fast,' said one of the women as she came forward and welcomed us.—'Yis, Miss, she's sinsible.—Ye know Miss Martha, Biddy, don't ye?'

A smile came over the wrinkled features, and the heavy lids unclosed.

'Now, won't she make a purty corpse if she only looks like that at the last!' said the woman admiringly.

'I am glad to see her so calm and peaceful,' whispered Martha.

'Isn't it a comfort, Miss?' cried the woman out loud. 'An' it's the work o' the world we had wid her till yester'day only, whin His Riverince himself cum down an' rasoned her into common-sense, an' she guy her consint to go to the new cimethry, quiet an' asy.'

'To go to the new cemetery?'

'Yis, Miss. Shure, she held out agin it to the last; said it was a horrid, cowld, lonesome place, an' she'd never lie comfortable there, wid niver a bone or a pinch o' dust of one belongin' to her within a mile. Cart-horses, she said, shouldn't drag her there, or to any place except a good churchyard full o' decent Christian neighbours. But the Archdacon argued the matther well. "Biddy," sis he, "be rasonable now. Where in all the country-side would you find a wholesomer place to be laid in," sis he, "than the new cimethry!—a fine, open, airy place, high an' dry. An' as for lonesomeness," sis he, "shure, it's fillin' ivery day—it is. Ye'll have the neighbours gatherin' all round you in no time. An' I'll tell you what I'll do for you," he sis; "if you'll consint to go there quietly, I'll put you nixt Mrs Donovan—shure, ye know her—an' thin ye won't feel lonely or out o' the way wid her within call." So thin she guy in.'

'Yis, I guy in,' said the dying woman feebly. 'I cudn't howld out agin' His Riverince. There's no denyin' that Mary Donovan 'ud be a good neighbour, quiet an' asy, an' niver an ill word out o' her head; but I'd rather be laid alongside o' Nolan. A good husband he was to me, an' niver as much as riz his hand to me all the days we wor together—barrin' he was in dhrink an' unconscious-like.'

'Alongside o' Nolan! Just listen to her now! And Oonagh churchyard twenty mile o' rough road away. Shure, it's battered to bits you'd be afore you got there, Biddy alanna. Yer ould bones 'ud niver stan' the jowltin'. An' perhaps it's come to bits the coffin would, they make 'em so thin nowadays.'

'Ay, ay; I know how thim funerals go gallopin' whin they git out o' the town; I'd be shook all to pieces, I'm feared, an' so guy my consint to go to the cimethry. It's an asy road enough; an' what does it matther, after all, whin the good God is in one place as much as another!'

Martha stooped down and whispered a few words. 'Yis, Miss Martha, I know; I'm none feared o' that. But I'm too far gone to spake much, honey.' Then the heavy lids dropped again over the glassy eyes, and I thought I saw an added shade on the gray face.

'I think she's goin' now, glory be to God! I know that look.'

'Miss Martha, could you be after singin' a bit of a hymn? That would bring her to, if

anythin' mortal could; she was always fond o' the singin', said the woman.

Martha hesitated, looked at the still face, and then at me.—'Rock of Ages,' I whispered—and she began the dear old hymn at 'While I draw this fleeting breath.'

I saw the pale lips move, and stooped down.

'Nolan's voice! Shure, I'd know it a mile off.—Ye're late, man; hurry on. It's tired o' waitin' I am.—Och, but ye're the pick of the world for the singin'!—It's gettin' cowld, alanna, an' the night's fallin', Nolan, an' I'm waried out.—Here you are at long-last. Glory be to God!—Nolan!'

'Glory be to God!' echoed one of the women, 'she's gone.'

It was even so. Had Nolan really come up the 'dark valley' to meet her, I wondered, as Martha stopped, and the women broke into ready Irish tears and ejaculations, in the midst of which we moved away.

The person who had acted as mistress of the ceremonies followed us to the door. 'Wasn't it well she didn't go back o' her word about the new cimethry? An' won't she make a lovely corpse, Miss Martha, wid that pleasant look on her face? We'll sind to the house for the things, Miss?'

'Yes; Jane will give them.'

'Sheets and things,' explained Martha to me, as we walked away, 'for the wake, you know. They festoon them round the bed, and cover over the tables with white. We always keep some to lend for the purpose.—But here is my "down-hearted" old woman looking out for me. I wonder what she wants cheering up for this time.'

'Come in, come in, Miss Martha.—An' you, Miss.—Shure, it's most wore out I am, lookin' for you.'

The poor old soul evidently felt aggrieved. A sickly-looking creature, with bright eyes, and a crooked back, which showed plainly, as she presently began to rock backwards and forwards on her stool. The one room was bare of comfort. As stranger visitor, I was installed on the only unbroken chair, while Martha balanced herself on a three-legged elderly one.

'I came as soon as I could,' said Martha. 'I was delayed at Mrs Nolan's. She is dead.'

'Och, wirra, wirra! Is she gone, thin? That's what I sint for you for, Miss Martha. Shure, His Riverince, he sis, I'll be the next. He had the heart to say that to me, a poor crooked old body.'

'He couldn't say that, Mrs Morris; you must have misunderstood him.'

'Deed, an' he did, thin—thim very words—standin' there foreinst me on the flure. "Mrs Morris," sis he, "Mrs Nolan is goin' fast; she'll be in glory before another sun sets over her head." "God forbid, sir!" sis L.—"She will," sis he. "An' the question is," he sis, "which of us will be the next to be called away? It behoves us to be prepared," sis he.'

'That was not saying you would be the next.'

'Ah, but it was, Miss Martha, just all as one o' sayin' it. A hearty, able, active man like him, what thought would he have o' dyin'? An' sorra preparation he wants! He might jist walk into heaven any day, wid a flower in his button-hole,

an' "God save all here!" on his lips.—No, no, Miss ; it was niver himself he meant at all, at all, but me. "Mary Morris, you're goin' to die, an' you're not ready"—that's the manin' of his spache.'

"And are you ready, Mrs Morris, if you should be called next?"

"I'm not, Miss Martha, an' I don't want to be called yet a bit; I want to live my life out. That's why I sint for you. I want you to pray the good God this night to let me live out me full life."

"Why, you are an old woman, and a great sufferer, and I should think you would be thankful to be released."

"Well, I wouldn't, thin. You see, Miss Martha, it's not as if I was a strong, able-bodied woman. Thin, I couldn't complain whin me time was out. I've always been aillin' an' wake, an' niver got more nor half the good out o' life that others got; an' I think it 'ud be only fair o' the good God to let me live twice as long, to make it even an' just.—You'll ask Him, Miss Martha, honey?"

"I'll pray for you, certainly, Mrs Morris, that you may not be taken away before you are ready and willing."

"Some payple are quare, an' say it's a wary world, an' they'd like to be gone from it; but I'm not that kind. The worst day I iver had, Miss Martha, I niver wished I was dead. You've tuk a load off me mind, alanna, for I'm sure the Lord 'll hear you. He's very good to thin that put Him in mind of their wants."

"Very, very good and pitiful. You remember what David says?"

"Shure, I wasn't thinkin' o' David," interrupted the old creature ruthlessly. "I was goin' to tell you about me own mother's first-cousin, ould Molly Malone. She was an ould, ould woman, an' not a bit like me, for she raly wanted to die. But she lived, an' lived, till she could bear it no longer, an' she bedridden for five year an' more. So sis she to her son Tim one day—he was her youngest son, an' gettin' to be an ould boy too, waitin' for the mother's death to bring home a wife—"Tim," sis she, "I'm thinkin' the Lord has forgotten me."—"Faith, an' I'm o' that same opinion meself, mother," he sis.—"I don't like to be overlooked," sis she. "Yoke the dunkey, Tim," she sis, "an' wrap me in me cloak, an' carry me up to the top o' the road, till I put Him in remembrance," sis she.—"An' he did. He put an ould bed in the cart, an' her atop of it, an' jowlited her up to the top o' the hill an' down agin widout a word. An' signs on it ! Miss Martha, whin he stopped at his own dure, she was a dead woman.—"Troth, an' she was in the right of it," sis Tim. "As soon as iver He seen her, He kindly give her the call."

"I think the jolting had something to do with it," said Martha, rising.—"Mrs Morris, I can't stay longer now. I will come and read to you another day. Good-bye."

"Good-bye; an' thank ye kindly, Miss. I feel quite cheered up now, honey!"

"Isn't it extraordinary," said I to Martha, when we were out of the house, "the clinging to life some people show? The poorer and more miserable they are, the less desire they evince to give it up."

"Except they think they are being overlooked," said Martha, "like old Molly Malone. I've heard that story so often, I can't laugh at it. She only told it to put me off reading the psalm for her.—See! there are the almshouses," continued Martha, pointing to a row of neat little houses, with pretty porches and gardens in front. "We won't go in. It's not my day. They are not very pleasant to talk to, poor things, just now. You see their endowment is in land, and for the last two years, owing to "Land League" and other troubles, there has been no rent paid. But for the Archdeacon, they would actually starve. He pays their weekly money out of his own pocket. It is just the same with the Orphan Fund, and Aged and Infirm Protestant Relief Fund. I don't know what we shall come to in the end; the Archdeacon can't go on supporting all the poor of the parish in this way."

"Why doesn't he get help from the people around?"

"He can't. They have not any money. The gentry are most of them living on borrowed money, waiting for better times; and the shopkeepers say business is bad. Lawyers are the only people who are making anything.—Oh! just wait a minute! This is Anty Dillon's."

A soft-looking woman, with bare, red arms flecked with soap-suds, came to the open door at the sound of our voices. "Good-evenin', Miss Martha!—Won't you come in, Miss?"

"Not to-day, Anty, thank you.—When did you hear from your daughter Rosanna? I hope she gets on well in her situation?"

"Deed, thin, Miss Martha, not to be asther tallin' you a lie, she don't like it at all, at all. She's for comin' home agin."

"Why? I heard it was a very good, easy place."

"She's not faultin' the sickuation, Miss; but, shure, no servant stays in it, specially housemaids, an' so she give notice to leave this quarter."

"For what reason?"

"The mistress. Nobody can put up wid her. She doesn't kill thim with work, but she waries thim out with nonsical talk about their souls, Miss, as if they were on the point o' death. But shure, she's not a Protestant at all, Miss Martha; she is one o' thim Methodees."

Martha turned away in vexation. "I had the greatest work to get her that place, and now she is leaving it for nothing. They are miserably poor; and she will come home, and live with them till her money is all gone and her clothes in pawn, and then she will expect me to find her another place."

"Her mother oughtn't to encourage her as she does."

Here Martha began to laugh. "Her mother! Didn't you recognise her? That was Anty Dillon, who was reported as "tearin' mad with the toothache," an hour ago."

"And wanting a bit of jam to help her to eat and sleep! She doesn't look much pulled down by her sufferings."

"Wait till I catch Molly, I'll jam her!" said Martha, in a tone of good-natured vexation.

Presently we came to a neat, whitewashed, tidy-looking, two-roomed cabin.

"This is one of our Orphan Homes," explained

Martha. 'Our way is to put the children by families, under the care of respectable elderly people, who bring them up as if they were their own. It answers very well. Brothers and sisters are not separated. They have all the advantages of home-life; and the tie between them and their foster-parents strengthens with time into real filial affection in many cases.—Our orphans generally turn out well,' continued Martha with excusable pride. 'We look after them, educate them to some extent, bind them to trades, or find situations for them as servants. But I think a great deal of their future success depends on the foster-mother. This woman has brought up two families most creditably, who are all doing for themselves in the world now.—Good-evening, Mrs Moore! How are the children?'

A bustling little woman, in an old-fashioned cap and a big apron, turned round from scrubbing a deal table with freestone. 'Good-evenin' kindly to you, ladies! Wait till I take off my *praskeen*, denuding herself rapidly as she spoke of the apron, and dusting two white chairs with it. 'Won't ye sit down, Miss, after yer long walk?—Shure the childhre is well an' hearty, thank God! They are away at the school now.'

'No, thank you; we won't sit down now. You're busy. I only came in with these little things for Betty. I think they will fit her.'

'Och! they'll be made to fit, Miss. She was just wantin' them; an' wasn't it the good Lord put it into yer mind to bring them this day, before the rain comes.'

'Mrs Moore,' said Martha hesitatingly, 'did you hear there would not be so much money as usual this month?'

'I did, Miss. The Archdacon come himself to insinse me into the rason of it. He was rale downcast. I tould him niver to trouble about it; shure, we'll git along somehow.'

'How will you manage this month on so little?'

'Well, Miss, you see, Moore has got a stroke o' work. That will be a help. An' I had a letter from Amerkay, from Judy—you remember little Judy Grace, Miss Martha?—an' she sint me a little matter o' money, an' that'll tide us over a month or more. An' indade, the other childhre will niver let me want the bit o' bread while they have it. They're rale good in sindin' me things.'

'But they send the money for your own use.'

'For me an' Moore. Yes, Miss. Shure, they look on us as their father an' mother. They can't remember no others, the creatures.'

'Will they like your spending it on these children, who are nothing to you or them?'

'Miss Martha, do you take me for a brute baste, to have the bit an' sup meself an' see the fatherless go hungry?'

There was real surprise and indignation in the good woman's manner. Martha felt called on to apologise for her implied suspicion of ungenerosity; and we then turned our steps homeward.

'Another trait of the Irish peasantry,' I remarked; but my companion was absent-minded, and made no response. 'We must pass Tom Daly's,' she said after some meditation. 'I ought

to speak to him, I suppose; but I don't know what to say. He is a Protestant; but I heard he went to the Roman Catholic chapel on Wednesday night, and walked in the procession of penitents. He was tipsy, of course; but that makes it all the worse.'

The said Tom held down his head, and busied himself with an old shoe he was patching, as Martha entered his little cobbler's shop. I stood modestly in the door, and listened.

'Tom, what is this I hear about your doings on Wednesday night?'

'Musha! I donna, Miss Martha. People sis more nor their prayers.'

'Didn't you go to mass and walk in the procession before all the chapel full of people?'

'Shure, I wasn't in me sinses, Miss; I was unconscious. The boys made me just half-dead; an', faix, I donna what I did or didn't do, thin.'

'Tom, if you would only take the pledge, it might be the saving of you.'

'Shure, I'm willin' enough to take it, Miss Martha, if that will do you; but the keepin' it is another matter. I've taken it often an' often; but sorra bit o' good that did me. It was worse nor ever I was, as soon as I broke it.'

'Tom, I wouldn't mind so much your going to mass, if you were in sober earnest. I would rather have you a good Catholic than a drunken Protestant.'

'Oh, Miss Martha, is it you to think so little o' me as that? An' does His Riverince seriously believe I'd do such a mane thing as turn? Drunk or sober, I'll never belie me church an' clargy. Miss Martha, I'll tell you what I'll do. I wint to mass, there's no denyin', on Wednesday night; but I was tipsy—bad scrat to thim that tuk me!—but I'll go to church this blessed night sober, and with me eyes open. There's for you! That'll convince His Riverince. Shure, I never was in church on a week-day afore, barrin' the day I was marrid; but I'd do more nor that to show the Archdacon I was no turncoat.'

Tom did go to church that Friday night, and edified the congregation by his serious demeanour.

Coming out of the shop, Martha encountered a lively group of girls and boys, when she, to my surprise, seized the biggest girl by the shoulder and gave her a good shake. 'I have just seen your mother, Molly Dillon. What did you mean, you naughty girl, by telling such a story? Don't you know that?' &c.

I need not give the sermon which followed. Molly looked frightened, and the other children interested.

Suddenly a little boy, with the bluest eyes and reddest hair I had ever seen, pushed forward.

'An' did Molly tell ye a lie, Miss Martha?'

'She did, Jack.'

'An' it's an awful wicked thing to tell a lie, Miss?'

'It is, Jack, awfully wicked.'

'An'—an' it's worse to tell two nor one, Miss?' cried Jack, stammering in his eagerness.—Martha assented.—'Miss Martha, you tould us on Sunday last that the man that made another do a wrong thing was the wickedest o' the two. It was all as one as if he did it himself, only maner.—Miss Martha, if you don't give Molly the jam, you'll

be afther makin' her tell *two* lies. She promised us a rale trate this evenin'.—"Miss Martha is goin' to give me a cup o' jam," she sis, "an' I'll give yez every one a taste."—She promised, Miss; an' she can't kape her word if you make her break it!

Martha stood nonplussed.

I stepped forward to the rescue. 'She promised you a treat. Now, would sugar-stick do as well as jam?'

'Faix, an' it would, Miss, an' betther.'—A general chorus.

'And you would hold that Molly had honourably kept her word, if she gave you a stick each?'—Approving grins, nods, and asseverations.—'Well, let me see. How many of you are there? Five?—Will that do?'

General delight, and a rush towards the confectioner's.

'If you had that young imp in your class Sunday after Sunday,' said Martha ungratefully, as we reached her own door, 'you would not be so ready to encourage his impudence with sixpences. But I'm glad the day's work is over.'

CINDERELLA DOWN-STAIRS.

AFTER telling us about an animal in its wild or natural state, Natural History sometimes adds the characteristics of its domestic condition. In like manner, we have all heard of Cinderella in her natural state, surrounded by the infinite possibilities of a fairy tale; and also of Cinderella in her domestic state, in which her habits and aspects are somewhat different, and rather more interesting, than those of her former state, because they have the advantage of being real. Cinderella down-stairs has not a bountiful godmother; often 'the Parish' has been her stepmother, and she is an 'orfling,' like the handmaiden of the distressed Micawbers. She never gets a glass slipper, yet her shoes are transparent enough; and how the other Cinderella ever danced in glass slippers, is a marvel to us, when this poor Cinderella is always breaking glass that nobody touched, by means of an invisible cat that haunts the shelves, as other cats haunt the garden walls. But the domestic Cinderella is, at least in her occupations, like her prototype of the story. She does hard service, and is despised, and sits among the cinders. No godmother, no dressing for a ball, no mouse-horses and walnut-shell carriage, are before her, leading through a bright vista to her destiny and to a Prince with a shining shoe in his hand. This Cinderella has not even heard of fairy transformations; she was never in Fairyland; she was never a child as other children are. Hers is the most unromantic life in the world; she lives down-stairs in unromantic regions of scrubbing and rubbing, and soap and cinders.

The best description of the common domestic Cinderella is of course from the pen that described 'the Marchioness,' and from the hand that was always finding diamonds where we blind folks only see vulgar dust. There is many a Mar-

chioness in every street of the shabby-genteel districts of all great towns. Tradesmen's wives and lodging-house keepers oppress and are oppressed by a long succession of them; and in the picture of the 'slavey' of the Dragon of Bevis Marks, lies only the strong-featured portrait of ten thousand elsewhere without the title and the cribbage. 'The Marchioness' as deftly drawn by Dickens, is an old-fashioned child who must have been at work from her cradle, afraid of a stranger, but cunning and clever—a small slipshod girl in a dirty coarse apron and bib, which left nothing of her visible but her face and feet: she might as well have been dressed in a violin-case. She does all the work of the house, is miserably lodged, scantily fed, and treated like a grown-up drudge; as the natural result of which hard treatment she acquires a habit of 'cooling her eye' at keyholes and generally developing her cunning. But deep down in her heart is a germ of love and self-forgetfulness and homely faithfulness, that the first touch of sympathy rouses into life once and for ever. There is something exquisitely touching in the half-sad, half-comic way in which this slipshod 'slavey,' aproned in her canvas violin-case, becomes an angel unawares. But under many a canvas bib there is a heart that is never found; poor Cinderella remains a cheap automaton; and whether she is a child, or a woman, or a witch, or a mechanical contrivance, there is no time to think, or nobody to care.

'The Marchioness' did not know how old she was; but she was in every way, except growth, an extremely-developed specimen of Cinderella. The age of these wonderful human creatures ranges from eleven to fifteen or sixteen. Most of them have had no household training, and come in the dullness of ignorance and in utter poverty out of the cheerless 'Union,' or out of miserable homes with the saddest surroundings. But the great marvel is—and it is one of the startling marvels that show on the ugly side of human nature—that these old children or diminutive women, whichever you like to call them, are expected to be perfection; and are turned adrift, as if they had come on false pretences, when their deficiencies appear—are sent elsewhere for the joltings and hard rubs of life to knock into shape their character and acquirements. They are to teach and train themselves, if they are not, as every proper-minded Cinderella should be, ready-made perfection; and if the jolts and hard rubs knock them to pieces, instead of knocking them into shape—again, nobody knows, and nobody cares.

Poor little Cinderella! only hired, and nobody's child. There is no one to believe she is a child at all; no one to care for herself and her future for her own sake; no one to teach her with kindness and with patience; no one to remember that when the cat and the mice cause mysterious disappearances, the fault, and not its doer, ought to be made to disappear; and that even when the china is broken, the ways of the breaker may be mended. Cinderella is at the most tractable age: she is the very same age as the boys and girls at school, or perhaps younger; nor can she be made a woman yet, by any amount of poverty, hurry, and drudgery all the week through. But it would be a mistake to say she is a child, for

all that. Alas! the poor have but short childhood, or none; and Cinderella down-stairs is one of the old children. Pity her, then, the more; and remember, in her provoking failings, that but for her many lifelong miseries, she would be a child; that she sometimes needs rest, enjoyment, sympathy; and that when any of us come across her, our kind word will not be thrown away upon the poor little ill-starred girl.

We have more sympathy with Cinderella of the kitchen, notwithstanding her tatters and untaught ways, than with her cousins who get a better start in life, as neat little maids in a nursery, or as the last and least in the divided work of a great house, where little country girls, rosy and fresh, fare plentifully in the servants' hall. Cinderella is much poorer, and often much younger; her life is far more laborious, and has less change or considerate treatment; and she is much more humble and grateful, which, after all, makes the strongest claim on our good-will. For Cinderella, though she grows up to be a Susan-Jane, seldom has a chance of becoming one of those upper servants who, in common with the gout and the powder-tax, are among the necessary evils of riches. She will never outrage Society by hinting a taste for blue china, or requesting leave of absence to attend a Language-of-Flowers Bee. She will never irritate us with the boast of the lady's-maid, who capped her list of qualifications by remarking that she had always married-off her young ladies satisfactory. She will never, in dearth of note-paper, offer her mistress 'a few sheets of mine, mum, if you won't mind using my monogram.' Nor will she imitate that housemaid, with whose description and parting remark Mr Punch frightened the advertising public: the young person applying for a housemaid's situation where a footman was kep', who objected to children, was engaged to and visited by a most 'spectable young man in The 'Orse Artillery, and had a fortnight's character from her last place—but who, not exactly suiting the advertiser, retired observing: 'I really ham sorry, mum, for I rather like your appearance, mum!'

No; Cinderella down-stairs is not of the species from which these awful beings are selected; she is far more harmless and helpless. She is an overworked, unguarded, unloved specimen of those most pitiable of mortals, the Old Children; and, as such, if we think rightly, most pitiable, and sadly interesting. For every variety of the Old Child is interesting, as every one is pitiable. Of course, it is well for Cinderella down-stairs that she has her woman's work to do and her loveless hire to get; her poverty makes both a boon. But it is ill for her—and the knowledge of it marks a blot in our estimate of human nature—that once she gets into her fiddle-case of a canvas apron and bib, no one believes any more how young she is; and she might as well, for all practical purposes, be like Dick Swiveller's Marchioness, a little patriarch in pattens with no idea of her own age.

Farewell, Cinderella! You are one of the necessities of our crowded cities; and after glancing at your unchildlike lot and your unloving treatment, we must leave you where we found you, yourself not knowing that you have yet the childlike right of your young years to be

considerately taught, forgiven, cared for. Sit down among the cinders. Your sisters are in bright homes, or pleasant school-rooms, or play-rooms noisy with laughter. Or some of them, a little older, are thinking of 'coming out,' dressing gaily, driving to the balls and parties to which no fairy godmother will take you, and at which, indeed, if you were present, poor Cinderella, you would be but a sorry figure! This is every-day life, you see, you wizen-faced child of work; there will be no Prince, and no glass slipper; and if you envy your little sisters their kisses, no one is going to be kind to you; and if you have ever heard of the balls to which your big sisters are going, it is presumption in you to need pleasure of some sort too. You are one of the unchildish children growing into womanhood; and the world assumes, by some odd freak of reasoning, that all unchildish children born to work are able to take care of themselves with impish preocuity, the moment they have got out of the cradle and laid hold of the broomstick!

NIGHT.

THE earth is veiled in twilight gray,
Day wings her flight;
The worshipped sun is borne away
On blushing waves of amber light;
Come then, thou Maid, and be our Queen;
Nought shall disturb thy reign serene,
O dark-eyed Night!

The weary earth mourns not the death
Of busy day;
The sighing wind now holds her breath,
To list to Philomela's lay;
And Night-woed buds, asleep since morn,
Awake, and hasten to adorn
Thy regal way.

'Mid dusky spheres is raised for thee
A throne on high;
The budding stars await to see,
The crescent moon come gliding by.
Then they'll entwine thy raven hair;
And Cynthia on thy bosom fair
Will gently lie.

Love lights his lamp, then steals away
To Psyche's bower;
And Hope, who twines her wreath by day,
Now hides in heart of drowsy flower.
Come, wave thy strange enchanted wand,
In magic circles o'er the land,
From thy dark tower.

I hear the tread of silver feet,
O coming Night!
Thou turnest, like a vision sweet,
The misty darkness into light.
I see thee now, and at thy side
Is gliding sleep—the dreamy-eyed—
Thrice welcome Night!

E. M. B.